

- [Home](#)
- [Articles](#)
- [Archives](#)
- [About Us](#)
- [Guest Writers](#)
- [Downloads](#)
- [CrethiPlethi](#)
- [Legal Terms](#)
- [Contact Us](#)



# CRETHI PLETHI

ARTICLES | BACKGROUND | OPINION | ANALYSIS

"The Middle East, Israel, Arab World, SouthWest Asia and Islamic Maghreb"

Wednesday, June 3, 2020 - 14:41 pm CEST

Search CrethiPlethi

Search

- [the middle east](#) ↓
- [israel](#) ↓
- [the arab world](#) ↓
- [gulf arab states](#) ↓
- [southwest asia](#) ↓
- [africa](#) ↓
- [more topics](#) ↓
- [opinion & analysis](#) ↓

» You are here: [Home](#) » [Blog](#) » [Arab-Israeli Conflict](#) » **“The Jews Stole Arab Land” vs The Grand Mufti of Jerusalem**

## **“The Jews Stole Arab Land” vs The Grand Mufti of Jerusalem**

 [Email](#) |  [Print](#) |  [RSS](#) |  [Comment](#) |  

Like 105

Share

Tweet

By David Meir-Levi

Originally [published](#) in the FrontPage Mag, November 25, 2011.



Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, the Hajj  
Mohammed Effendi Amin el-Husseini  
(source: destination-  
yisrael.biblesearchers.com)

The cornerstone argument in the Arab narrative against Israel is that the Zionists in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries came to the Land of Israel and stole Arab land. This is a very simple assertion, easy to visualize, seemingly logical and amenable to a brief presentation: after all, Zionists did come from Europe to what was then Palestine, and the Arabs were already living there. So obviously when the Jews came they took Arab land.

Although there exists voluminous evidence to the contrary in Arab and Turkish and British sources indicating the exact opposite, it is difficult to present this contrary evidence and explain its importance in as brief and simple a manner as is done with the Arab assertion. There are too many variables: Arab demographics, Jewish demographics, Zionist agrarian reclamation technology, land purchases, crown land vs. privately owned land, absentee landlords, etc. This imbalance puts the advocate on behalf of Zionism and Israel at a disadvantage, even though the evidence supporting the Israeli narrative and contradicting the Arab narrative is vast and thoroughly vetted. For an excellent compilation and analysis of this evidence, see Kenneth Stein, [\*The Land Question in Palestine, 1917-1939\*](#) (University of North Carolina Press, 1984, reviewed [here](#) and [here](#)).

However, there is one testimony from an unimpeachable source stating that the Jews stole no land, but rather bought land in vast quantities from willing sellers who were the legal owners of the land that was sold. This unimpeachable source is so unarguably innocent of any pro-Israel or pro-Jewish or pro-Zionist sentiment that there can be no rational question regarding the veracity of his testimony. That source is the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, the Hajj Mohammed Effendi Amin el-Husseini (1895 to 1974).

El-Husseini was a key figure in the creation of the concept of Palestinian nationalism and the most high-profile leader of violent and incendiary opposition to Zionism from the 1920's onward, until the creation of the State of Israel rendered his leadership irrelevant. He used his powerful political and religious position as the Grand Mufti (supreme religious leader) of Jerusalem to promote Arab nationalism, incite violence against the British, and preach Jew-hatred and the annihilation of the Jews of British Mandatory Palestine. He was an ally of Hitler before and during World War II, recruited Muslim legions in Bosnia to serve on the eastern front in Hitler's ~~Wehrmacht, and developed full blown plans for concentration camps in Palestine in imitation of the German~~

~~This website uses cookies to improve your experience. We'll assume you're ok with this, but you can opt-out if you wish.~~

Okay

Read More

UN partition plan of November 29, 1947 (for a brief biography of el-Husseini and a list of book-length biographies see [here](#)).

As the highest official representative of the Arabs of British Mandatory Palestine, el-Husseini was interviewed by the Palestine Royal Commission led by Earl William Robert Wellesley Peel, hence known as the Peel Commission.

The Peel Commission was a Royal Commission of inquiry sent to British Mandatory Palestine in November of 1936 for the purpose of examining and reporting on the causes of the Arab-Jewish violence in Palestine and suggesting possible resolutions. After months of research and interviews of [major Zionist](#) and Arab leaders, the [Commission published its report](#) in July of 1937. The report recommended a partition plan for separate Arab and Jewish states; but this plan was never implemented, although the Zionists accepted it, due to vociferous Arab opposition.

The Peel Commission report had some very salutary things to say about the Zionists and their impact on the land and on Arab society and economy. One of the most important for debunking Arab anti-Israel accusations is:

*“The Arab population shows a remarkable increase since 1920, and it has had some share in the increased prosperity of Palestine. Many Arab landowners have benefited from the sale of land and the profitable investment of the purchase money. The fellaheen (Arab peasants) are better off on the whole than they were in 1920. This Arab progress has been partly due to the import of Jewish capital into Palestine and other factors associated with the growth of the (Jewish) National Home. In particular, the Arabs have benefited from social services which could not have been provided on the existing scale without the revenue obtained from the Jews...Much of the land (being farmed by the Jews) now carrying orange groves was sand dunes or swamp and uncultivated when it was purchased...There was at the time of the earlier sales little evidence that the owners possessed either the resources or training needed to develop the land.” The land shortage decried by the Arabs “...was due less to the amount of land acquired by Jews than to the increase in the Arab population.” (Chapter V in the report).*

El-Husseini's interview on January 12, 1937 was preserved in the Commission's notes and referenced, although not published, in the full report. It has been summarized by a number of scholars, including Kenneth Stein, *The Land Question in Palestine, 1917-1939* (Univ. of North Carolina Press, 2009) and Howard M. Sachar, *A History of Israel from the Rise of Zionism to our Time* (Alfred A. Knopf, 1976); and a detailed analysis with quotations from the interview can be found in Aaron Kleiman's *[The Palestine Royal Commission, 1937](#)* (Garland Publications, 1987, pp. 298ff.).

The selections from the interview presented below can be found on line [here](#) and [here](#). Sir Laurie Hammond, a member of the Peel Commission, interviewed the Mufti about his insistence to the Commission that Zionists were stealing Arab land and driving peasants into homelessness. He spoke through an interpreter.

**Sir Laurie Hammond:** Would you give me the figures again for the land. I want to know how much land was held by the Jews before the Occupation.

**Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin el-Husseini:** At the time of the Occupation the Jews held about 100,000 dunams.

**Sir Laurie Hammond:** What year?

**Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin el-Husseini:** At the date of the British Occupation.

**Sir Laurie Hammond:** And now they hold how much?

and which have not yet been registered in the Land Registry. That does not, of course, include the land which was assigned, about 100,000 dunams.

**Sir Laurie Hammond:** What 100,000 dunams was assigned? Is that not included in, the 1,200,000 dunams? The point is this. He says that in 1920 at the time of the Occupation, the Jews only held 100,000 dunams, is that so? I asked the figures from the Land Registry, how much land the Jews owned at the time of the Occupation. Would he be surprised to hear that the figure is not 100,000 but 650,000 dunams?

**Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin el-Husseini:** It may be that the difference was due to the fact that many lands were bought by contract which were not registered.

**Sir Laurie Hammond:** There is a lot of difference between 100,000 and 650,000.

**Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin el-Husseini:** In one case they sold about 400,000 dunams in one lot.

**Sir Laurie Hammond:** Who? An Arab?

**Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin el-Husseini:** Sarsuk. An Arab of Beyruth.

**Sir Laurie Hammond:** His Eminence gave us a picture of the Arabs being evicted from their land and villages being wiped out. What I want to know is, did the Government of Palestine, the Administration, acquire the land and then hand it over to the Jews?

**Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin el-Husseini:** In most cases the lands were acquired.

**Sir Laurie Hammond:** I mean forcibly acquired-compulsory acquisition as land would be acquired for public purposes?

**Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin el-Husseini:** No, it wasn't.

**Sir Laurie Hammond:** Not taken by compulsory acquisition?

**Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin el-Husseini:** No.

**Sir Laurie Hammond:** But these lands amounting to some 700,000 dunams were actually sold?

**Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin el-Husseini:** Yes, they were sold, but the country was placed in such conditions as would facilitate such purchases.

**Sir Laurie Hammond:** I don't quite understand what you mean by that. They were sold. Who sold them?

**Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin el-Husseini:** Land owners.

**Sir Laurie Hammond:** Arabs?

**Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin el-Husseini:** In most cases they were Arabs.

**Sir Laurie Hammond:** Was any compulsion put on them to sell? If so, by whom?

**Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin el-Husseini:** As in other countries, there are people who by force of circumstances, economic forces, sell their land.

**Sir Laurie Hammond:** Is that all he said?

---

**Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin el-Husseini:** A large part of these lands belong to absentee landlords who sold the land over the heads of their tenants, the majority of these landlords were

absentees who sold their land over the heads of their tenants. Not Palestinians but Lebanese.

**Sir Laurie Hammond:** Is His Eminence in a position to give the Commission a list of the people, the Arabs who have sold lands, apart from those absentee landlords?

**Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin el-Husseini:** It is possible for me to supply such a list.

**Sir Laurie Hammond:** I ask him now this: does he think that as compared with the standard of life under the Turkish rule the position of the fellahin in the villages has improved or deteriorated?

**Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin el-Husseini:** Generally speaking I think their situation has got worse.

**Sir Laurie Hammond:** Is taxation heavier or lighter?

**Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin el-Husseini:** Taxation was much heavier then, but now there are additional burdens.

**Sir Laurie Hammond:** I am asking him if it is now, the present day, as we are sitting together here, is it a fact that the fellahin has a much lighter tax than he had under the Turkish rule? Or is he taxed more heavily?

**Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin el-Husseini:** The present taxation is lighter, but the Arabs nevertheless have now other taxation, for instance, customs.

**Lord Peel:** And the condition of the fellahin as regards, for example, education. Are there more schools or fewer schools now?

**Grand Mufti of Jerusalem Amin el-Husseini:** They may have more schools, comparatively, but at the same time there has been an increase in their numbers.

The Hajj Amin el-Husseini, the intractable opponent of Zionism, a Jew-hater on par with Hitler, admitted under questioning that no Arab land was stolen; no Arabs were wiped out, no villages destroyed. Rather, the Jews bought hundreds of thousands of dunam (about ¼ of an acre) of land from willing sellers, often from absentee Arab landowners. Moreover, thanks in part to the Zionists and the British, the quality of life for Palestine's Arab peasantry was vastly improved, with less taxation, more schools, and an increase in Arab population.

The next time someone spouts the Arab line about how Zionists came and stole Arab land and drove Arabs out, just quote the Mufti.

*David Meir-Levi writes and lectures on Middle East topics, until recently in the History Department of San Jose State University. Read more from David Meir-Levi:*

1. [Big Lies: demolishing the myths of the propaganda war against Israel \(part 1\)](#)
2. [Big Lies: demolishing the myths of the propaganda war against Israel \(part 2\)](#)
3. [Big Lies: demolishing the myths of the propaganda war against Israel \(part 3\)](#)

---

Posted in: [Arab-Israeli Conflict](#) • [Historical Documents](#) • [History](#) • [Israel](#) • [Israeli-Palestinian Conflict](#) • [Palestinian Arabs](#) • [Zionism](#) Tagged with: [1937](#) • [Arab-Israeli Conflict](#) • [arabs](#) • [British Mandatory Palestine](#) • [Hajj Mohammed Effendi Amin el-Husseini](#) • [history](#) • [Israel](#) • [jews](#) • [palestine](#) • [peel partition plan](#) • [Sir Laurie Hammond](#) • [the Peel Commission](#) • [zionism](#)

**More from CrethiPlethi**



### [Tension between Egypt and Hamas](#)



### [The Campaign to Defame Israel](#)



### [Netanyahu, Obama remarks following meeting at White House, May 20, 2011](#)



### [WikiLeaks: Syria Defends “Peaceful Objectives” against Israeli “Threats”](#)



### [Morocco’s Berbers and Israel](#)

Comments are closed.



This website uses cookies to improve your experience. We'll assume you're ok with this, but you can opt-out if you wish.

Okay

Read More

About this website...

## **CRETHIPLETHI.COM**

**CrethiPlethi.com is an online magazine dedicated to deliver articles, background, opinion and analysis on the Middle East.**

**Covering the Middle East, Israel, the Arab World, Southwest Asia and the Islamic Maghreb.**

**Find us:**

[Go To Top↑](#).

## **Support Our Mission**

Do you like our mission? You can be part of this by supporting our activities through donations and funding. Please contact us directly via our [Contact Form](#) about the possibilities. We are committed to protecting the privacy of each donor's personal information.

## **Our Facebook Fan Page**



**CrethiPlethi Center**  
Like Page 579 likes

**CrethiPlethi Center**  
about a year ago



**MIDDLE EAST MAGAZINE**  
ARTICLES | BACKGROUND | OPINION | ANALYSIS  
MIDDLE EAST, ISRAEL, the ARAB WORLD, SOUTHWEST ASIA and the ISL  
**CRETHI PLETHI**

**CrethiPlethi Center updat...**

3

Comment

1

**CrethiPlethi Center**  
about 3 years ago

Kevin Myers, the nature of anti-semitism & the media's schadenfreude



**THE SUNDAY TIMES**  
Get the h...  
Sorry, ladies — equal pay has to be

## Our Tweet Timeline



## Tweets by @CrethiPlethi

CrethiPlethi Center Retweeted



**Elder of Ziyon**

@elderofziyon

EoZ #Israel News: Jordan sentences a Palestinian to seven years hard labor for planning to stab Jews in Jerusalem [ift.tt/2IJbeo3](http://ift.tt/2IJbeo3)

Mar 22, 2018

CrethiPlethi Center Retweeted



**Melanie Phillips**

@MelanieLatest

The 'vast majority of countries' misrepresent the Geneva conventions and international law to support or suck up to those who aim to exterminate Israel. Do some research, for goodness sake, instead of parroting politically corrupt and demonstrably false propaganda

[Embed](#)

[View on Twitter](#)

## Latest Comments



• [Rob Harris:](#)

Hello Mike, Thank you for your positive feedback to the article. I felt there wasn't too much critical analysis of ...



• [Mike Garde:](#)

Thanks for this considered and well constructed article. A follow up article on the manner in which the editorial contro...



• [Manuel Rodulfo:](#)

THE CLUELESSNESS OF CLAIMING THAT OBAMA'S MIDDLE EAST POLICIES WERE A FAILURE CANNOT BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH, WHAT THE...



• [Phil:](#)

As long as Obama is the president of the usa do not trust the us government.....



• [Klas Wulff:](#)

This website uses cookies to improve your experience. We'll assume you're ok with this, but you can opt-out if you wish.

Thank you for an good read....

[Okay](#)

[Read More](#)

## Top Artikel



## Historical Documents

A Chronological Collection of Historical Documents Relating to the Arab-Israeli Conflict...

- [McMahon-Husayn Correspondence \(1915-1916\)](#)
- [The Sykes-Picot Agreement \(1916\)](#)
- [The Balfour Declaration \(1917\)](#)
- [Agreement Between Emir Faisal Husseini and Dr. Weizmann \(1919\)](#)
- [Faisal-Frankfurter Correspondence at the Paris Peace Conference \(1919\)](#)
- [British White Paper of June 1922](#)
- [Mandate for Palestine \(July 1922\)](#)
- [The Peel Commission report \(July 1937\)](#)
- [The Alexandria Protocol \(Oct 07, 1944\)](#)
- [Letter from President Roosevelt to King Ibn Saud \(April 5, 1945\)](#)
- [The Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel \(May 14, 1948\)](#)
- [United States Recognition of the State of Israel \(1948\)](#)

## Add to your Technorati favorites



## Subscribe to RSS or by Email



## Middle East Photos



This website uses cookies to improve your experience. We'll assume you're ok with this, but you can opt-out if you wish.

Okay

Read More

## Links

Sites we're watching. However, linking to these sites doesn't mean that CrethiPlethi.com always or fully endorse all the content on these sites...

- [ + ] Academia & Universities (40)
- [ + ] Blogroll (73)
- [ + ] Dutch Sites (27)
- [ + ] Governments & Ministries (36)
- [ + ] News Sites (134)
- [ + ] Organizations (71)
- [ + ] Satire (6)

## Middle East News Website

### CRETHIPLETHI MIDDLE EAST NEWS



*"COVERING the MIDDLE EAST, ISRAEL,  
the ARAB WORLD, SOUTHWEST ASIA,  
and the ISLAMIC MAGHREB"*

ARTICLES | BACKGROUND | OPINION | ANALYSIS

[Go To Top↑](#)

## RSS feed

Subscribe to our RSS feeds...

- [Middle East Affairs \(RSS\)](#)
- [Israeli Affairs \(RSS\)](#)
- [U.S. Middle East Policy \(RSS\)](#)
- [EU Middle East Policy \(RSS\)](#)
- [Comments \(RSS\)](#)

## Quotes and Sayings

About the Region, Islam and cultural totalitarianism...

— John Strawson, “*Why I am against the AUT Israel Boycott of Israeli Universities*” in *Engage* (18 May 2005)

[Next quote »](#)

## Weather Forecast

Middle East region weather forecast...

- Jerusalem, IL

23°

3:41 pm IDT

Sunny

[Go To Top ↑](#)

CRETHIPLETHI.COM - ONLINE MAGAZINE COVERING the MIDDLE EAST, ISRAEL, the ARAB WORLD, SOUTHWEST ASIA and the ISLAMIC MAGHREB - since 2009



## Pages

- [Home](#)
- [Articles](#)
- [Archives](#)
- [About Us](#)
- [Guest Writers](#)
- [Downloads](#)
- [CrethiPlethi](#)
- [Legal Terms](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

## Find Us

- [RSS](#)
- [FeedBlitz](#)
- [GooglePlus](#)
- [Twitter](#)
- [Facebook](#)
- [Friendfeed](#)

---

This website uses cookies to improve your experience. We'll assume you're ok with this, but you can opt-out if you wish.

- [Flickr](#)

Okay

Read More

- [YouTube](#)
- [Technorati](#)

## About Us

CrethiPlethi.com is an online magazine dedicated to deliver articles, background, opinion and analysis on the Middle East

Covering the Middle East, Israel, the Arab World, Southwest Asia and the Islamic Maghreb

## Terms

© 2009-2017 | Except where otherwise [noted](#), all content, graphics and materials on [CrethiPlethi.com](#) are All Rights Reserved

-  [Powered by WordPress](#)